

ANNUAL REPORT 2014 - 15



PSYCHOLOGY COUNCIL
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to introduce this report for the Psychology Council of New South Wales on 2015. This is my first President's message and I am proud to give this overview of what was a busy and productive year.

This year we saw a slight decrease in the number of new complaints against psychologists. However, the number of matters referred to the Council for management, increased. During the reporting period, 57% of complaints were referred to a hearing of some kind, and the number of practitioners who have conditions on their registration that require monitoring increased by 38%. The number of times the Council exercised its immediate action powers increased by 175%, with 50% of those matters coming to the Council by way of mandatory notifications. This may reflect the effectiveness of mandatory reporting requirements being increasingly recognised and acted upon by health professionals.

Over the coming year, the Council will initiate greater engagement with the profession. One of our objectives will be to visit regional, rural and remote areas in order to gain a better understanding of the particular challenges faced by those who practise outside the large metropolitan areas. The Council also looks forward to a continued strengthening of its relationship with the Psychology Board of Australia and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, and ongoing co-regulatory activities with the Health Care Complaints Commission.

I take this opportunity to thank the five outgoing Council members for their service over the years. Their commitment to their regulatory responsibilities has ensured that the people of NSW have been protected. This work has also meant that registered psychologists continue to maintain appropriate standards of conduct and professional performance that the public would expect of them.

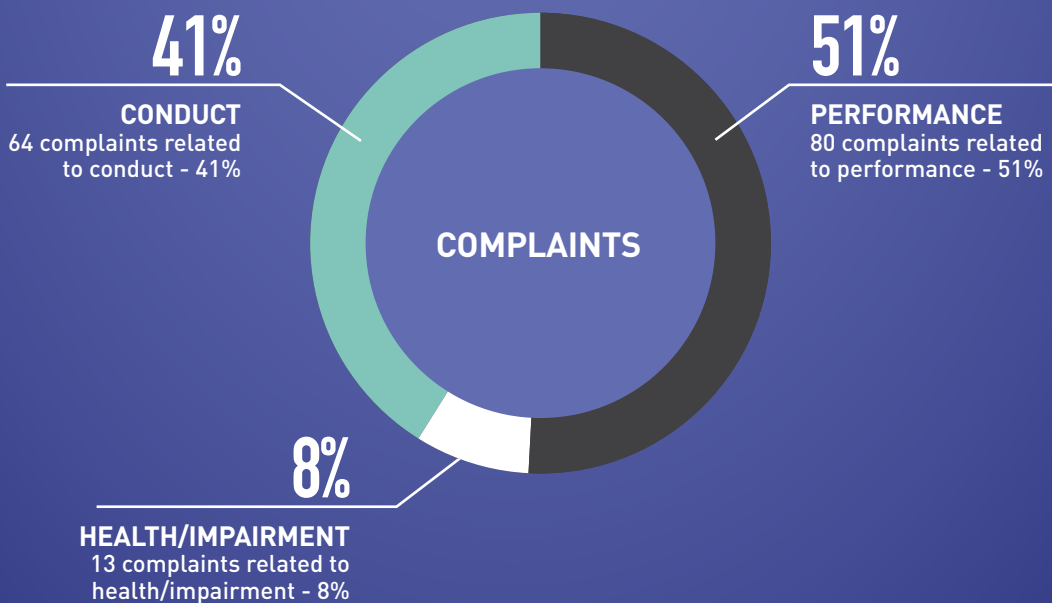
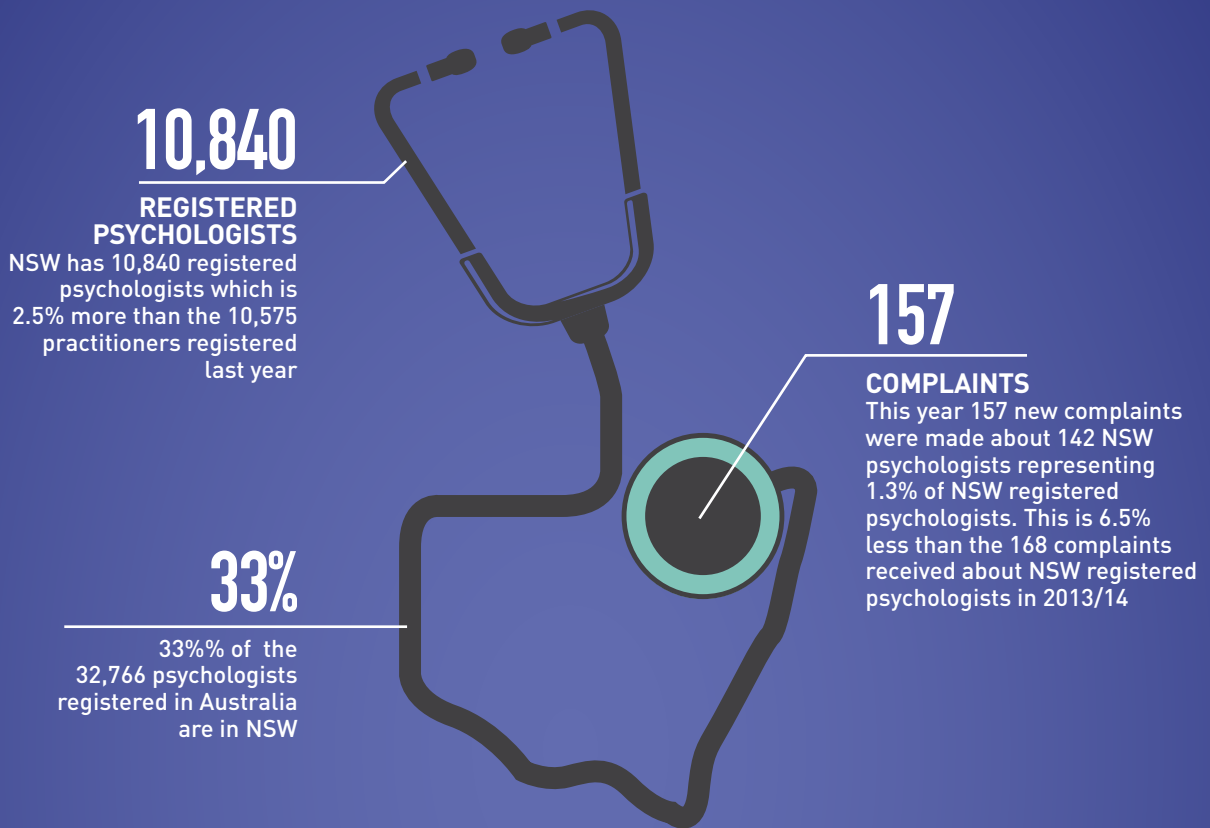
Finally, I would like to welcome the new members of the Council. The Council has a new President, Deputy President, Psychologist Member, Legal Member and Community Member. In particular, I would like to recognise and thank the excellent and tireless contributions provided by the Health Professional Councils Authority (HPCA) staff in supporting the work of the Council. The Council and I look forward to a productive and rewarding year ahead, with continued support from the HPCA to perform our regulatory and legislative functions.



(Professor) Alexander Blaszczynski
President
Psychology Council of New South Wales

REGULATION OF PSYCHOLOGISTS IN NSW IN 2014/15

YEAR IN SUMMARY



Regulation of psychologists in NSW in 2014/15

Year in summary

NSW has 10,840 registered psychologists which is 2.5% more than the 10,575 practitioners registered last year and 33% of the 32,766 psychologists registered to practise in Australia.

This year 157 new complaints were made about 142 NSW psychologists representing 1.3% of NSW registered psychologists. This is 6.5% less than the 168 complaints received about NSW registered psychologists in 2013/14.

Complaints about NSW psychologists included:

- 64 relating to conduct - 41%
- 80 relating to performance - 51%
- 13 relating to health/impairment - 8%.

23 mandatory notifications were received about 21 practitioners, that is 14.6% of total complaints received about NSW registered psychologists this year.

Complaints were received from:

- 55 patients 35.1%
- 40 other practitioners 25.5%
- 39 relatives of patient or practitioner 24.8%
- 9 from other agencies 5.7%
- 8 members of the public 5.1%
- 6 other sources 3.8%.

Complaints management included:

- 6 Tribunal hearings
- 3 Performance Review Panels
- 3 Performance assessments
- 28 Impaired Registrants Panels
- 13 Health assessments
- 19 Counselling.

146 complaints were closed during the year with outcomes including:

- 5 registration cancelled or disqualified
- 1 registration suspended
- 7 conditions imposed
- 2 HCCC resolution or conciliation
- 4 referred to other body
- 59 no further action required
- 4 no jurisdiction to act
- 58 discontinued
- 6 withdrawn.

Council Membership

Section 41E of the Law prescribes that there are eight members of the Psychology Council appointed by the Governor.

Members who are registered psychology practitioners:

- Associate Professor Caroline Hunt BSc (Hons) (Psych), MPsyCh (Clin) (Hons), PhD, FACPA – President
- Associate Professor Michael Kiernan BSc (Hons) (Psych), MPsyCh (Clin) (Hons), PhD – Deputy President
- Ms Wendy McCartney BA MA (Hons), Dip Crim, FAPS
- Dr Robyn Vines BA (Hons) (Psych), MSc (ClinPsych), PhD, FAPS, FIAAP, GAICD
- Mr Thomas O’Neill BA (Hons) (Psych), MPsyCh (Clin)

Community members:

- Mr Geoffrey Graham LLB – Legal Member
- Ms Margo Gill DMU, MApp Sc, MBA, Cert IV Training & Assessment
- Dr Patricia Jenkins BA (Hons), PhD

During the year no new members were appointed.

One member retired at 30 June 2015, Dr Patricia Jenkins.

Members who served the maximum term and retired at 30 June 2015:

- Associate Professor Caroline Hunt
- Associate Professor Michael Kiernan
- Ms Wendy McCartney
- Mr Geoffrey Graham

Attendance at Council Meetings

The Psychology Council met on 11 occasions. Attendance at the meetings was as follows:

Member	Meetings Attended	Meetings Eligible to Attend
Associate Professor Caroline Hunt	10	11
Associate Professor Michael Kiernan	11	11
Ms Wendy McCartney	10	11
Dr Robyn Vines	10	11
Mr Thomas O’Neill	10	11
Ms Margo Gill	11	11
Dr Patricia Jenkins	11	11
Mr Geoffrey Graham	8	11

Executive Officer

The Psychology Council was supported by Executive Officer, Ms Myra Nikolich, Acting Deputy Executive Officer, Ms Maxine Kauter, part time Professional Officer, Ms Miriam Wyzenbeek, and two Program Officers employed by the HPCA.

Committees of Council

Section 41F of the Law provides that the Council may establish committees to assist it with the exercise of its functions. Members of committees need not be Council members. The Psychology Council was supported by the Finance Committee and the Education and Research Committee during the reporting period, with membership as follows:

Committee	Membership	Meetings Attended
Finance	Associate Professor Caroline Hunt	3
	Associate Professor Michael Kiernan	3
	Dr Robyn Vines	3
	Mr Geoffrey Graham	3
Education and Research	Dr Vida Bliokas	-
	Associate Professor Graham Tyson	-

Regulatory Committees and Panels

Part 8 of the Law prescribes the committees and panels that support the Council in undertaking its regulatory activities. They include Assessment Committees, Impaired Registrants Panels and Performance Review Panels.

The Psychology Council was supported by two of these bodies during the reporting period with membership as follows:

Regulatory Committee or Panel	Membership	Meetings Attended
Impaired Registrants Panel	Dr Mary-Anne Friend (M.D.)	3
	Dr Michael Diamond (M.D.)	17
	Dr Susan Messner (M.D.)	1
	Dr Alison Reid (M.D.)	3
	Professor Alexander Blaszczyński	13
	Dr Lizabeth Tong	17
	Dr Emma Collins	2
	Mr Chris Willcox	5
	Dr Pauline Langeluddecke	1
	Ms Gail Purkis	3
Performance Review Panel	Professor Alexander Blaszczyński	1
	Dr Lizabeth Tong	1
	Ms Jennie Burrows	1

Meetings and Conferences

The Psychology Council continued its regular practice of meeting with the Heads of Departments and Schools and Senior Public Sector and Local Health District Psychologists to facilitate information sharing on topics of interest to all parties. The Council held this annual meeting on 11 November 2014. The Council was also represented at the following meetings.

Name	Attendance
Council Presidents' Forum meeting with the NSW Minister for Health	Associate Professor Caroline Hunt
Council Presidents' Forum – bi-monthly meetings	Associate Professor Caroline Hunt

Overseas Travel

There was no overseas travel during the reporting period.

Council Communications

The Psychology Council website is the principal medium used for communicating information to psychologists and the community. The website is updated regularly and includes links to other key bodies in the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

The Psychology Council also regularly distributes electronic newsletters to registered psychologists with a principal place of practice in NSW. Further information is available on the Council's website www.psychologycouncil.nsw.gov.au.

Remuneration

Remuneration for members of the Council is as follows.

President	\$2,336 per annum
Deputy President	\$1,752 per annum
Members	\$1,752 per annum

In addition, Council members receive sitting fees of \$448 per day and \$224 per half day for the conduct of Council Inquiries or hearings under section 150 of the Law, and \$436 per day or \$218 per half day if a Counselling Committee is convened to conduct counselling interview. Council members are reimbursed for expenses incurred when travelling on official business at Council direction.

Members of panels and tribunals also receive remuneration and reimbursement of expenses.

Financial Management

The Psychology Council's accounts performance as reported in the Financial Statements is as follows.

Accounts Performance 2014/15	\$
Revenue	1,208,326
Operating expenditure	1,085,402
Gain/(loss) on disposal	(11,445)
Net result	111,479
Net cash reserves (cash and cash equivalents minus current liabilities)	1,746,728

* Included in the net cash reserves is Education and Research bank account balance of: \$126,816

The Psychology Council's budget for the period 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 is as follows.

Budget 2015/16	\$
Operating expenditure	1,428,925
Revenue	1,214,705
Net result	(214,220)

Full financial statements are presented in Part 3 of this report 'Financial Statements for NSW Health Professional Councils'.